



## Make the Connection. Power the Future.

March 21, 2010

John Chamberlain  
565 Booth Hill Rd.  
Trumbull CT 06611

Senator Daily, Representative Staples and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to give input on Senate Bill 484, An Act Concerning the Governor's Revenue Plan. The Governor has proposed, among other things securitizing the revenue stream of the CT Clean Energy Fund and diverting the funding from its intended purpose – developing and promoting clean energy – towards the general fund. A move like this would have dire consequences for the solar industry here in CT.

I am here today to testify on my own behalf and on behalf of the 24 other employees of Sunlight Solar, a Milford-based business that has been installing solar equipment for CT homeowners and businesses for over 5 years. For years now, CT has successfully cultivated the state's solar industry, and Sunlight Solar is a product of the state's success in that goal.

Right now the state of CT has a vibrant solar industry, and thanks to both the work of companies like ours and the efforts of the CT Clean Energy Fund (CCEF) we now see an active interest in solar technology from home and business owners all over the state. Sunlight Solar has installed systems for well over 400 homeowners in towns from Milford out to Moosup and we field inquiries about projects and possibilities from an array of CT residents every day.

While the interest in solar technology continues to grow, it is true that our industry still relies on subsidies to make the investment in green technology sensible. While the federal government has stepped up their support for and incentives to install solar over the last couple years, the CCEF is still a necessary ally to our industry and their programs make all of our work possible.

The solar industry does not want for this dependency to remain in place indefinitely. Sunlight Solar and Solar CT, our industry group, have both advocated for legislation (House Bill 5362, specifically) that is being considered this term that would put in place a plan to step down state incentives for solar installations in an orderly fashion over the next 10 years. If that bill passes, then we would finally have a plan to allow the solar industry CT has worked so hard to build become self-sustaining, an aim that we are excited about and wholeheartedly endorse.

Unfortunately, at the very same time this proposal, embodied in Senate Bill 484, is before us, and I would like to quickly make a few statements about how the plan to remove funding from CCEF would affect the solar industry and our company specifically. In the years that CCEF has been in place, CT has systematically worked to send the message to solar installers and manufacturers alike, that this state is open for business. De-funding the CCEF would send a new message, that CT is shutting down shop, and that solar and renewable are no longer a priority here. Companies like ours have succeeded over the last few years, and we want to keep growing, if possible. Whether growth is possible, we

certainly want to keep providing for the over two dozen families who are currently supported by salaries from our business.

This move would kill green jobs. Everyone seems to love the term "green jobs" these days, and Sunlight Solar provides an array of well-paid jobs with a chance for CT residents to learn the ins-and-outs of the solar industry and to advance within a growing company. We want to keep training electricians the peculiarities of solar and keep finding talented people to register as apprentices to become electricians one day. The management of Sunlight Solar, of which I am a part, draws excitement and encouragement at the opportunity to see administrative staff blossom from entry level positions into sales roles, management roles, and leadership positions in an industry where the possibilities are literally countless.

I know that times are tight right now, and that balancing the budget and being smart about how the state prioritizes and puts our budgets together is top of mind for everyone on this committee, and probably every last person in the building today. I do not envy each of you, being in the position of figuring out how to pick which priorities to keep and push and which to cut. I have largely ignored the fact that the funds for CCEF are not tax dollars, rather a small charge on every ratepayer's bill here in the state of CT, hence to redirect these monies would be to create an entirely new tax.

In conclusion, I would simply ask you to consider the importance of sticking with projects that are already under way. The CCEF represents an investment by the state of CT towards a long-term goal – an image of our state as one where clean energy is a viable option that can be installed, manufactured, created here within the borders of CT. CCEF has helped the solar industry make great strides while helping CT residents be less dependent on dirty energy sources and less prone to rate hikes. We want to keep making these strides and we want to stand on our own two feet as quickly as possible. Please don't cut the legs out from under our state's fledgling solar industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John L. Chamberlain", written in a cursive style.

John L. Chamberlain  
CT Office Coordinator  
Sunlight Solar Energy